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APPROVAL OF UNDP ASSISTANCE TO A PROJECT OF ARGENTINA

IPF:(1992-96) $ 9 456 000

(ARG/91/010) - Computerization of the Ministry of Economy and Public Works and Services (Supplementary Assistance)

Date of approval by the AC:[1/]	1 July 1992
Expected duration:	Three years
Proposed executing agency:	Government
Government implementing agency:	Ministry of Economy & Public Works & Services
Proposed UNDP contribution:	$ 105 000 Source of funds:IPF
Government cost sharing:	$17 214 900
Previous UNDP contribution:	$ 1 446 000
Total UNDP budget:	$18 765 900

Project background

The Government of Argentina is currently undertaking a radical program of economic change with the ambitious aim to simultaneously stabilize the economy, revitalize production, and restructure the role and functioning of the state aparatus. The recently approved Country Programme for Argentina clearly reflects the above-mentioned government priorities in identifying the following three programmme areas for UNDP-support during the period 1992-96: Support to sustained economic growth; Strengthening of management capacity of the State; and Support to improvement of social conditions.

The current project falls clearly within the second thematic area through its contribution to improve the efficiency of the public sector institutions, but at the same time the succesful implementation of project activities will have direct impact on the performance of the Argentine economy since the role of the Ministry of Economy and Public Works/Services is paramount in the definition and implementation of transparent rules of the game for the principal economic actors. Increased efficiency in the execution of economic policy decisions will have significant effects on the overall health of the economy and the well-being of the population.

The initial impetus for the project came from the Ministry as part of its efforts to strengthen its institutional capacity to manage the workload and the day-to-day operations of the Ministry more efficiently. The challenge facing the Ministry is to replace the existing out-dated manual operational procedures often operated by staff without familiarity with computers into modern, computerized systems that could be operated by the same or less

[1/] This Fact Sheet reflects the status of the project/revision at the time it was approved by the Action Committee; modifications to the project/revision may have occurred subsequently.

staff. The initial problem to be solved is the absence of a proper system of tracking documentation processed by the Ministry . The introduction of computers will permit wide-scale use of word processing for document preparation, electronic mail for communication and dossier transmission, and elctronic registry and storage of files.

To determine the feasibility of computerizing the Ministry of Economy in this respect a pilot project was initiated in August 1991 which has provided valuable experience for the substantive revision currently under consideration. The present approval has been evaluated by an independent in-depth evaluation mission in May 1992 which expresses the view that: "The project is addressing an important problem within the Economy Ministry and is supported at the highest levels of the Ministry. Even at this very initial and formative stage of the project the computer system enjoys a wide usage level and acceptance by the users[... and that much has been accomplished in a relative short time with a relative small number of staff". In addition, 60 percent of the project staff, including the development coordinator, are women.

Description of project

The development objective of the project is to strengthen the management capacity and administrative efficiency of the Ministry of Economy and Public Works/Services .

The project aims at computerizing the management, tracking and follow-up of key documents processed within the Ministry. The extended computerization will involve the installing of appropriate equipment (workstations, printers, local area networks, and a wide area network) and basic software (word processing and electronic mail), the training of users, and the further development of the document management and tracking system, including the incorporation of images (e.g. for the reading and saving of faxes issued and received).

Project activities will include: (a) extending the hardware environment to include 800 workstations; (b) increasing the network to connect 14 buildings (the 4 principal Ministry buildings and 10 other buildings) and 5 existing mainframes; (c) extending the document management facility extended to include management of draft versions of documents as well as material prepared outside the system; (d) training 2,400 Ministry staff out of a total of 6,000 in the use of word processing, electronic mail, and the document management facility; (e) incorporating facilities to view images (e.g.fax) at the workstations; (f) gaining public access via computer to decrees and resolutions of the Government; (g) undertaking a feasibility study of computerizing the files and procedures of the Trademarks Directorate; and (h) establishing an Informatics Unit within the Ministry to maintain and support the installed system.

Inputs

UNDP will provide a total of (US)$3 673 600 for experts and consultants in informatics, systems development, installation/maintenance of systems and specialized training; on-the-job training for all experts and consultants; (US)$2 640 000 for specialized training; (US)$1 420 200 for expendable equipment and (US)$7 437 800 for non-expendable equipment; and miscellaneous costs.

Financial data

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Personnel	4 043 100
Subcontract	90 000
Training	2 640 000
Equipment	10 022 300
Miscellaneous	524 500
Total	17 319 900